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- (71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): THOM-SON LICENSING S.A. [FR/FR]; 46, Quai A. Le Gallo, F-92648 Boulogne (FR).
- (72) Inventors; and
- (75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): PARK, Jeongsoon [KR/US]; 738 Young Graduate House, West Lafayette, IN 47906 (US). HEO, Seo, Weon [KR/KR]; 127-18 Gaebongbon-Dong, 152-090 Guro-Gu (KR). MARKMAN, Ivonete [BR/US]; 11388 Royal Court, Carmel, IN 46032 (US). GELFAND, Saul, Brian [US/US]; 70 Sugar Maple Court, Lafayette, IN 47905 (US).

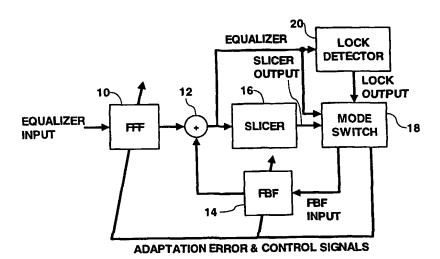
- (74) Agents: TRIPOLI, Joseph, S. et al.; c/o Thomson Multimedia Licensing Inc., 2 Independence Way, Suite 2, Princeton. NJ 08540 (US).
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(54) Title: EQUALIZER/FORWARD ERROR CORRECTION-AUTOMATIC MODE SELECTOR



(57) Abstract: An apparatus for automatically selecting one of a standard decision directed (dd) mode and a soft dd mode in a decision feedback equalizer (DFE) for receiving a data signal includes an equalizer (30) utilizing forward error correction (FEC) for providing first and second output signals corresponding to a DFE automatic switching mode and a soft automatic switching mode, respectively, and a comparator (36) for comparing byte error rates (ByER) of the first and second output signals for selecting as a superior mode that mode associated with a lower ByER and outputting the output signal with the lower ByER. A lock detector (30) provides a lock signal derived from the DFE output signal with the lower ByER and a mode switch (38) selectively places the DFE outputs in one of the dd modes or a blind mode, depending on the lock signal.

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